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TAGS: [KFLU](#) [AEMR](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [KFLO](#) [TBIO](#) [KSAF](#) [KPAO](#) [PREL](#)
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SUBJECT: SITREP: H1N1 PANDEMIC HAS THE POTENTIAL TO
OVERWHELM YEMEN'S HEALTH RESOURCES

REF: A. SANAA 1850
[B](#). SANAA 1134
[C](#). SANAA 875

[1](#)1. (U) Summary. Yemen has 415 confirmed cases of H1N1 influenza, and health officials suspect an additional 800 cases. The ROYG has a 50,000 supply of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) to prevent the spread of the virus and 100,000 doses of Oseltamivir (Tamiflu) to treat H1N1 patients, but has no vaccine to inoculate people before being infected. One public hospital continues to treat H1N1 patients, while private hospitals are refusing to admit suspected cases, as concern for the virus spreads. As the number of H1N1 cases increases, the ROYG's inability to convince hospitals to treat H1N1 patients is concerning. As the numbers of H1N1 cases rise, the pandemic threatens to overwhelm health resources within Yemen. End Summary.

415 CASES CONFIRMED

[1](#)2. (U) As of October 20, the Ministry of Public Health and Population had 415 confirmed cases of H1N1 influenza and reported 15 deaths from "swine flu." According to Dr. Abdulhakim Al-Kohlani, Director General of Disease and Epidemiological Surveillance, the ROYG currently has only one PCR (polymerase chain reaction) machine to test samples; as a result, the ROYG is able to test only 30 samples a day. Thus, health officials are not testing contacts, only treating them if they have symptoms. Kohlani told EconOff on October 21 that he predicts there are at least 800 more cases in Yemen, raising the number of H1N1 influenza infections to well over 1000. (Note: The Ministry of Health has requested USG assistance to procure additional PCR machines. End Note.)

ROYG RESPONSE

[1](#)3. (U) The Ministry of Health's original USD 60,000 budget for surveillance has been supplemented with USD 300,000, specifically for H1N1 influenza surveillance and detection. The ROYG has approximately a 50,000 supply of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and 100,000 doses of Oseltamivir (Tamiflu), some of which were donated from Bahrain. The ROYG does not have H1N1 vaccine and will be unable to meet the Saudi requirement to vaccinate those going on the Hajj in mid-November. The ROYG is waiting for a supply of WHO vaccine to come in by late November or early December, and is expecting 2.2 million doses of vaccine at that time. (Note: This will be too late to vaccinate people going on the Hajj. End Note.)

[1](#)4. (U) The ROYG continues to close classrooms and schools when H1N1 cases are detected. Kohlani told EconOff on

October 21 that, so far, the ROYG had closed one school in Hajja governorate. On October 27, Saba News reported that three schools were closed in Sana'a after several students tested positive for H1N1 influenza. Another October 27 Saba News report indicated that only one hospital, the Al-Thawra Public Hospital in Sana'a, is receiving H1N1 patients; the other hospitals are refusing to receive suspected H1N1 cases. Kohlani admitted that despite Ministry of Health directives, it is difficult to convince private hospitals to access potential H1N1 patients due to the fear that health workers will become infected themselves.

15. (U) Comment: The official number of H1N1 cases in Yemen (415) is most likely understated, since the Ministry of Public Health and Population has the ability to test only 30 samples a day. Estimates that reach into the 1000s are presumed accurate. As the number of H1N1 cases increases, the ROYG's inability to convince hospitals to treat H1N1 patients is concerning. As the numbers of H1N1 cases rise, the pandemic threatens to overwhelm already insufficient health resources within Yemen. End Comment.
SECHE